

pop 724
ake zurich il
60047-0724
us

hands of f
part 3

fuck being
put together..

hands off part three

these are the monsters inside of me. you put them there and then you took away my voice so they could never get out...but you fucking forgot about my hands. you can't take away the power in my hands and my pen in this paper.

i will get this out of me
one way or another i will get this out of me

i am hiding inside myself i am feeling nothing if i come out even for a second i'm gonna scream and if i start screaming i won't stop and when i am done screaming for me i'm gonna scream for my sister and then i'm gonna scream for my mother and they are gonna start screaming with me and so are all the others hiding inside themselves until we get louder and louder and someday we are gonna drown out yer voice.

i am sick of shutting myself off to stay safe in a world full of YOU. i have a picture of YOU in my head-no name, no face...i see YOU in the things that have been done to me. that's right, i see YOU only as an extension of ME. (usually it's the other way around).

this is about my self image...

and this is important.

this is important becuz i spent seven years of my life having my head pushed into desks or floors or anything convenient so they didn't have to see my face. i spent seven years looking at the ground and now i am supposed to remember not to look there. i'm just supposed to believe that everything they taught me about myself is a lie. after seven years suddenly i am not ugly and i am not stupid and i am not crazy.

yeah, whatever.

i'm not even going to waste time talking about how important communication is to me and how much i want a response, becuz i feel really stupid and really fucked over when i talk about how important it is and then i still get no response.
i just realized how mean and jaded this goodbye page sounds. it's probably good that i'm so tired right now, cuz if i wasn't i would be writing the same things, except all accomodating and sugar coated...i love when i haven't slept-it's about the only time i'm completely honest.
my address is po box 724 lake zurich il 60047-0724 usa and my phone number is 312 395 0597

i am going to be moving and changing addresses alot for the next few months so be patient when you write to me. hopefully when this is over i will have moved to portland and be living in a girlhouse.
well, i guess that's it. oh yeah, don't review this in any of yer publications. i don't feel like writing a big long explanation of why, but if you wanna write and ask i'll tell you.
now it's around 7 and i really really need to go to sleep.

sweet dreams...



To open your doors to the future -
open them for others.

heather

ps - i'm a superstar distro is
dead and gone :((

pps - i'm still a superstar!! :D

★ this was written July 6 - July 9 ★

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THE Goodbye Page

it's 6:30 in the morning and i really need to go to bed, but i have been trying to come up with a goodbye page, which i probably shouldn't be doing right now i am so fucken pissed about alot of stuff, like how many people i know who amaze me and that i have learned so much from but becuz they don't do zines they don't feel like their work is valid and neither do alot of people, and there is really no way for them to be heard or be open to feedback becuz their work isn't accessible or not accepted in punk. whatever, i'm ready to quit doing zines and take the world by storm playing cello... anyways, i hope that we can start looking beyond bands and zines as our only forms of communication i know that i have learned more from conversations and sitting up being weird with jenny at 3am, but becuz those aren't tangible things that i can hold in front of everyone and show that they are real and important i end up feeling like the only work i do that matters is the work in my zines... and for everything i write about i work through a hundred things so that fucken sucks... yeah, and i am in no way separate from this cuz i do it all the time in a million ways but if you have any ideas on how to work on this write to me!!!

while i'm in a mood, i should also bring up the way it has been brought up to me and i have noticed that the way i write and speak is in this really untouchable annoying all together way which is really alienating and i need to be working on that- not putting out another zine right now and i have totally put it off becuz it is inconvenient and uncomfortable for me to acknowledge what a fucking privilege it is for me to be sixteen and college educated and know all these nice neat buzz words i can throw into my writing and conversations and impress people if i really need to and i do it all the time and i wish people brought it up to me more when i did it, and in the future i hope to be acknowledging this more and thinking about it and working on it...

this is about me and the boys (cuz isn't it always

9 or 10 or 100 pretty white boys who have no names in my head just those stupid faces that all blur together one big mess all i see is the mouth and the hands. the mouth is screaming at me and the hands are over my mouth face body. the hands are breaking me apart turning me into body parts pieces easy to digest and reassemble into something more accomodating than i was..

and now i am looking in the mirror and trying to figure out what it is that makes me ugly to you and also trying not to cry becuz i don't get it, what makes yer face better than mine? what about an arrangment of shapes and colors sets me apart from everyone else? i can't put it into words but i know it's there becuz my heart breaks everytime i look into a mirror... or is that just yer voice in my head telling me that my heart should be breaking? sometimes i forget which is yer voice and which is my heart becuz they seem all too interchangeable right now and everything you have ever told me about myself seems true.

and now i am thirteen again and you are in front of me and behind me and surrounding me and i can't move and i hear yer voice in my head defining the person i became and maybe you didn't realize the power you had in those words the words that have followed me my whole life the stupid words that you used to describe my face- a face that you probab don't even remember you defined my body when i was on the kitchen floor after i didn't eat for days.. weeks??? i forget but you were there laughing and squeezing yer eyes shut so that you didn't have to look at me.

you fucking better look at me

look what you did to me

these are the things that you did to me

i like to tell myself that this isn't real. i've spent alot of time trying to convince myself that there is nothing wrong with the way i see myself. the longer i pretend this isn't fucking scary the less chance i have of working through it. here is an incomplete list of things i have done and my behavior patterns that let me know that i still have to work through this.

1) more than once i have smashed mirrors

i can't look at people when i am talking to them.

3) i have tried to starve myself

i can't look at myself in mirrors or pictures without getting angry sometimes

5) i cried when a friend told me that i am beautiful.

if someone is laughing or yelling, in the back of my head i wonder if they are laughing at my face.

when i get really sad, angry, embarrassed, or scared i hide my face.

...and you should see me right now. you should see me becuz if one more person tells me about how strong i am, i'll show you what it's like to be sitting in a ball in the corner hoping you don't die and having people insist that you are so fucking strong when you feel so powerless and like you are just in the way in a world that is moving so fast you know there is no way you can survive there. god, you should see me right now. i'm not writing these words these words are writing themselves and i'm crying so hard i can't see straight...and my hand is hiding my face.

these are the things i become

when no one's around.

things that i am trying to teach myself...

i am strong, but i don't always have to be

all of the standards i was taught about beauty and self worth are F-U-C-K-E-D

i have to define those things myself

much of the violence and abuse i have encountered was not targeted at me specifically

it is not my fault

things like my idealism and unconditional love and ability to show people what i am feeling are positive things

this is the beginning, not the end

i have control over alot of the things in my life that hold me back

i have a life to look forward to

i am a survivor

the key word is trying...

this page, since there must be
4, is a gigantic mad
tearful overdue.

FUCK YOU

to all the reasons i never told people
this stuff before, to all the reasons i
kept it my DARK SECRET, that i felt
crazy, that i felt i would never be "normal"
or "OK", that i would never find peace
or true understanding, to all the times i
couldn't even feel dreams cuz i was too numb
or fucken AWAY from this body,

i will heal ♥ ♥ ♥, yes, i will,
and i do have peace i love and other people
with these pains will heal, we all will
cuz we CAN and we WANT to.
everyone deserves peace. and they also
deserve a safe space to voice this
stuff: TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH.
be aware and be thoughtful. don't keep
it a SECRET or make it bad thru yr
silence. • everyone's gotta make that safe space.

her heathen-

i talked to you on the phone tonight. i am listening to
the fugees cover of a bob marley song on a mix tape i made
someone. it is like i don't know where to start. i feel empty
right now, and kinda sick. about our class talk- i am glad with
alot of the stuff we worked through. i think i was really
minimizing your early childhood as a workingclass person and
i am sorry for doing that. i see now how whenever classism is
brought up you feel yer anger and hurt about yer childhood
before yer present status and experience comes into mind. it
must be a really complex position to be in. also, i have REALL
thought about what you said about feeling stupid around me, a
and one thing i definitely do is like, you'll say something,
and then i will say it, like repeat it, but use different word
and be all articulate and middleclass about it, and it totall
makes you feel dumb AND it silences the language you used. so
i will work on that cuz i know i do it alot and i do it to a
lot of my friends. i guess that before we talked i thought th
you were really hostile to critique about classism, and i did
understand it and i got mad about it. now i understand better
where that "hostility", or just anger, is coming from, and how
when you think of classism, you automatically think two thing
how you were hurt by it, and then how you might hurt.

i am a little uncomfortable with you saying that you can
separate the two- like saying how you can separate how you hurt
and how you hurt others, cuz i think it is all totally connect
especially since both things are within you, and both things a
YOU like how they are both yer personality- how you have been
oppressed, and how you oppress. but maybe you do connect them.

god, i feel like shit. i am so sick but i don't know why. it
just this feeling in my head and throat. i feel close to break
ing down all the time. like my mom mentioned me being younger,
and then she was talking about my three year old cousin's new
room and how it has these huge windows and how i am scared
shitless of windows at night, and started to cry and put my
head down like i was tited so she couldn't see. my therapist
told me i probably shouldn't talk to her about it at all cuz
she has been really unsupportive and made me feel really
guilty and doubt myself. like, she doesn't believe me and she
blames me. it sucks. i have done all these exercises, and i want
to share them with you in case you want to do any of them in.
i learned them in therapy.

ok, i made a list of self-affirmations to read whenever i
t scared or i get a panic attack. then, i wrote about my
ar, like one of them in detail (that is scary to do, though).
so, i did relaxation with my therapist but you could do it
th one of yer friends, and you concentrate on feeling really
laxee and safe. another thing that i haven't been able to do
: imagine a safe space and write about it in detail, and then
agine yerself there and practice going there, esp when you

t scared or panic. also, ummm, oh, have a symbol or something
hold onto that is a "safe object" like it is something
at comforts you and makes you feel safe. also, make a list
strategy of what you can do when you are having a panic
tack, and then read it while you are having an attack and
Y to follow it.

so anyway, that is some things... oh yeah, there is some-
ing else i need to talk to you about that has really
othered me. ok, i need to tell you that when we were at yer
ouse and you had that panic attack and dragged yer cello
own the stairs and were banging things around yer room i
elt really really REALLY unsafe, like i felt totally un-
omfortable. and i know that there are times you express
our panic attacks with violence, and i am not trying to
lame you for them at all, but rather to say that it does
ake me really uncomfortable and that is related not only to
he abuse in my home, but also my mental health. i guess i
ave alot of fear sometimes about this one way our mental
ealth would not go good together like if we lived in the
ame house. and my feeling on it have been bothering me for
orever, but i finally have to share them with you. i guess i
eel really afraid cuz i know i cannot handle any kind of
iolence around me, and i shouldn't have to. i have to feel
ompletely and totally safe in every fucken way possible. and
f someone is being violent, in any way, even just slamming
loors or something- i get really upset and i'm uncomfortable.

also, i think sometimes i get nervous cuz i know as much as
i will be there for you or another friend in crisis, i know
that i cannot be surrounded by crises or panic attacks all
the time cuz i KNOW that will be totally bad for me. right
now i have to feel completely safe and i'm scared to see
someone else in crisis a lot becuz i will start to freak
out and get really scared i will go into crisis. i have to
have alot of peace and complete safety around me. also, i think
this relates to how you and i react to our mental health
completely differently. you demand attention and visibility,

these
are
some
things
from
my
list of
"what is
my
revolution"
and they
are really
important
due at
this
exact
moment.

6. Taking care of my body, treating it right.
Get some sleep. Eat healthy foods. Drink
water. Don't wear myself out. Honor my body.
Trust my body. Use natural herbs. Treatments
more. Treasure my body. Do good things
for it. REALIZE ITS WORTH THE TIME.
REALIZE ITS INTEGRAL TO MY HEALTH.
WELL-BEING. REALIZE IT IS ME.
Don't be scared of it, scared of dying,
passing out, crazy sicknesses. Trust
that my body and mind are ultimately
connected AND BOTH are undeniably
me. Me and mine.


7. Heal my heart. Realize its pain. Recognize
the validity of this pain. Remove
the burns.

* RECLAIM MY EMOTIONS.
* LEARN HOW TO BE OPEN AGAIN.
* HOW TO cry again.

find my sensitivity again. feel my whole
self again. feel pain and joy fully.

8. Learn how to again be vulnerable.
to trust again.

9. Stop fearing that i am evil or bad.
Know that i am beautiful and good and
that i have a lot of love. A lot of love.
A lot of beauty and care.
I am undeniably human with a
soul that is good.

I HAVE A GOOD SOUL 

in the past couple days i have seen a shooting stars

a sunset, a sunrise




a rainbow, and lots of stars pattern

in the sky and i have planted

named my cactus

summer.

daisy seeds and

this is some hope   

difficult
day



just now i started to freak out and think i was going to lose my mind and go crazy, for forever, oh my god that was so fuckin scary. like i imagined myself completely freaking out and then i thought i was going to, like RIGHT NOW, lying in my bed and fuck fuck i felt disassociation or whatever the fuck happenening. there is this song playing saying don't worry about a thing and talking about the sun rising and i was trying to convince myself that nature will save me like it always does but i am so afraid i will go away and never come back, oh my god like what if that happen happened and i never returned like it FINALLY overtook me like i am so scared it will god i am so scared and when i begin to think about it i begin to lose it and i have to jolt myself and not think those thoughts, THOSE THOUGHTS cuz i cannot handle them AT ALL. man FUCKYOUFUCKYOUFUCKYOUIWISHICOULDWRITE IT FOREVER. fuck. god like i cannot even think about them cuz i will have a panic attack i am having one god don't let it get bad like when i look towards my door and my hair prickles and i shake, i can tell i'm gonna have to go wake up my dad in a minute, god what will i tell him uh dad i am freaking out AGAIN sorry you have to sit with me fuck i can't do that ok i cannot write about the rest cuz i have to change my thought to protect my mind protect my mind i wish i didn't have to fucken PROTECT and HIDE.



it is tomorrow i am here and last night i slept in my parents room and i still had some nightmare or feeling cuz i woke myself up screaming and this is fucken hard cuz i wanna deal with it but if i think about it in too much DETAIL then i freak out & get scared that my mind will slip away like not come back and i don't wanna lose this heart and mind god i just want peace i want to feel like the rest of my soul when the fear is being quiet. i pretend TOO MUCH like it doesn't exist, that i'm "okay" and then all the rest of me proves me wrong. and when ever i so much AS THINK of the thoughts it's all there WAITING for me it is always waiting for me & it comes out & then it starts to take me over. TAKE ME OVER i just want to have full fucken peace cuz i know i have it in my soul & this fear doesn't BELONG there its not my heart, its NOT. FUCK.

and i tend to go into myself. and also, i know that you are real expressive of yer feelings, and that vis awesome. but i know i could not handle that right now, like being with another person who is constantly in panic attacks or is freaking out cuz i would get all scared and stuff, like i need total peace

the reason i am all worried about this is becuz i felt guilty for feeling this way, and i felt i should be telling my feelings. but i really shouldn't feel guilty cuz this is what i need right now, and i have to pay attention to what i need around me and i have to learn to demand that. like, it i really big deal for me to be able to say "i need this" and "this makes me uncomfortable". so i wanted to tell you those things so that i don't have them unspoken between us. i tota accept the way you deal with your meental health and expres your panics, THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH IT, it's just that my mental health and what my needs are totally clash with it right now and i felt you should know that, like i know that violence makes me super uncomfortable and stuff, as much as understanding it, it still hurts me you know. i don't know how we'll deal with these differences, but at least i feel better having said it, i am sure we can talk about it. also, just see someone in crisis makes me freak out too.

ok, i also wanted to say that our talks have really helped a lot, and i feel really comfortable and safe when talking to about mental health. i feel we'll be able to be there for each other in ways that are really healthy cuz we both know how important that is. in here is that list of "techniques" to use when you are having an attack. i do love you and think of you and i hope you know you will survive.

Jessica

i printed this letter becuz jessica was one of the first people that i was ever able to talk to about my mental health, and also what she wrote made me think about my patterns of violence and how they affect other people. and she's one of the raddest people i know.

Dear Jessica-

About a month ago i started writing you this superlong letter, but it's nowhere near done and i need to respond right away to some of the things you wrote concerning my violence patterns and the way our mental health has affected eachother.

want to start by saying how amazed i am that you were able to write the things that you wrote. i know how hard it is sometimes for you to affirm all of the things that you need and want from people, and i think it is RAD that you were able to do that so well in yer writing. know i'm always 100% behind the work you are doing with yer mental health, family, and personal growth, as well as anything else you are working through.

od, you have no idea how much it fucken kills me to think about how you must have felt the night you were at my old house and i started throwing things all over my bedroom. i can't think there is anything i could say to articulate how sorry i am, and what is most fucked about the whole thing is that about two weeks before that my father did almost the exact same thing to me, which brings me to the point that my temper isn't completely becuz of my panic attacks, and god, i wish it was... becuz at least that would be a better explanation than that i am JUST LIKE MY DAD. and when i hear his words and see his actions in me even now, i feel so far away from him i fucken want to die becuz how could i live knowing that i am imposing him on everyone?

have been trying to deal with why my first impulse in any threatening situation is to either shut myself off or be violent. so far i have come up with the fact that it helps people away from me... and i know that the fucking violence i faced my whole life kept me away from the people that imposed it on me. also, i have been told that this negative thing for me to express anything bad about myself is just a way to feel better. and if i express myself through violence then i feel like i have control over something and i'm not powerless or weak. so, i sometimes feel too stupid or inarticulate to express myself through words or writing that i feel like i can't grasp and violence seems like something really accessible to me. this looks so fucked on paper. i can't even believe i'm saying this like it's this acceptable part of me that i'm explaining to you.

my name is jessica. i am nineteen years old, i am and i am safe right now. i feel safe in my house and it is scary to sit right in front of the window and with my back facing the rest of the kitchen. but i am safe with my body right now, like i am healthy and i am not sick and i feel in control. i am safe.

i am safe. safe. no one wants to hurt me. i don't believe any of this. why do they all want to hurt me. i don't know. But i know they do, i know someone might be watching me right now and they want to hurt me. i am scared. i am safe. i am starting to look around me. Fuck. Maybe it's not a good idea to write about this. but sometimes i can pretend it doesn't exist. i guess it does we

He must think about it it can be his feeling, he has the ADHD, i'm trying to write for me i'm writing for me, i'm crying i am not in control anymore. i'm just my friend,

by jessica

This is so scary...

do you see yet how this all ties together???

boys shoving my face into the ground is me three

years later breaking yer doorwindownose is my

dad chasing me into my closet is having to hide

from fucking everyone in closets my whole life

is being alone is having panic attacks is the

way i scare people away to save myself is the

way i run away everytime you get too close is

me writing this instead of screaming it is the

way i will hold onto that pillowchairbedpost as

it could really ever save me is the way i felt

when i was hurt so bad i had to go to the police

is the day i realized they(you?) all have the same

eyes is the day i finally let myself start crying

again is feeling so unimportant and small is how it

is so easy lately to forget what matters to me is

feeling like a monster when i look in the mirror

is not being able to separate reality from what

they taught me

Learning How To Play Their ~~YOUR~~ Games

i know that my violence is coming between us all the time and i have recently learned that it is coming between me and others as well and i want it to actually, it's probably good that i acknowledge that this isn't all becuz of my panic attacks becuz then i can also acknowledge that i have the power to work through it. it's just really hard, becuz i try to isolate myself and totally detach when i think i'm going to get violent becuz i don't want anyone to see it, and i am so busy hiding it that i can't work through it.

anyway, i totally understand how my violence makes it real hard to for you to trust me, and impossible for us to live together. i'm really glad that you brought up that was why you don't want to live with me in portland. up until i got yer letter i have been really hurt and confused and scared about why you didn't want to live with me. i'll admit that i am still a little hurt and really scared, but i think you are totally right. you fucken deserve to be in an environment that makes you feel safe. and i hope that one day i make you feel safe.

it's about 3:30 in the morning right now and i am starting to get a little tired. this house makes me feel so small sometimes, especially at night. it's not always a bad feeling but right now it feels bad. i wish someone was awake. i don't know why, cuz if they were i would just be ignoring them. it would still be nice... anyway, i feel really stupid about this letter so far, cuz i am leaving out so much and trying to figure out why i get so inarticulate when i am talking to you. even the things you wrote to me about class and mental health, which i totally agreed with and believed, felt like things that i would want to say and have tried to say but can't and it makes me so mad... nat at you, at myself. i half don't even want to finish this letter cuz i know that when do you are gonna send me one back way more articulate and smart and i'm going to agree with everything you say so i won't even be able to write you back this awesome letter critiquing you. realize that none of this is directed at you i love the work you are doing, i just wish i could be doing it too.

hope you know that i don't expect you to be ere for me all the time.i understand that u are going through as much,if not more,than am right now.both of us to make OUR health d OUR safety and OUR comfort most important ght now.and i think that this is especially rd for both of us becuz the people in our ves that were supposed to be the most loving i supportive made us feel we couldn't talk out our needs and should hide the things that a wrong with us.FUCK SELF DOUBT FUCK BEING HAMED AND FUCK HIDING.it feels so good to say at and mean it-to know that i am taking actual pps towards building something better for me.

...i wanted to talk about how our mental health s affected eachother.first of all,the reason at we even became friends is becuz of the fact at we are both mentally ill and the people ound us usually don't understand and they sinterperet alot of what our behavior means.i member thinking how rad it was being able to lk about what was going on with me and have meone be responsive.it still was one of the jor things that made me able to acknowlege verything that was going on with me.

u are so so right about the ways that we act to our health affecting both of our comfort in our friendship.the way i am so in ur face about what is going on with me would be upsetting to you,who is trying to deal with at's going on completely on yer own.and the ay you like to hide,or keep to yerself,yer antal health would make me feel ashamed or ke there is something to hide.and the ways e deal are totally valid and they work for us nd that is what's important.and i also think hat the abuse we faced/face has affected the ay we behave.you may want to be quiet becuz fter something happened at yer house everyone

the dear everyone i have ever trusted-

fuck you for making me feel invisible and for making me doubt myself and for making me wonder if i am really here half the time and for always always letting me know that i don't belong and

that no matter what i do i will be second best and making me fucking crazy and for not stopping me from believing all the wrong things that i believe about you and for not even questioning

all of the wrong things that you think about me and fuck you for never even considering the fucking terror that i go through 24-7...that i have to fucking structure my life around.how do you think that feels?what goes through yer head

when you are making me feel this way or you are standing by watching while other people make me feel that way or you watch me make myself feel that way.what goes through yer head???

what

yer

goes

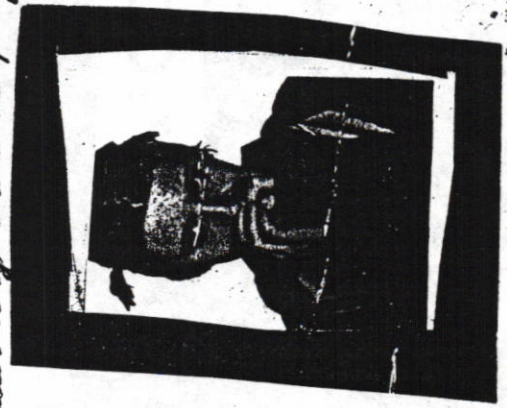
through

head???

(never fucken ever)

and this
is what i
the rest
the time

... learning how to play the game



(quiet)

had to pretend like it didn't happen. and i may want to be loud about it, becuz in skool and at home silence meant safety and since i am out of those situations i am just now relearning how to talk and it feel fucking rad. i hope we can find ways to help eachother deal with what we are going through without having to compromise the things that make us feel better.

i have actually been thinking about this a lot lately-ways that my panic attacks and everything else might make people uncomfortable. i am not sorry at all that i am the way that i am. i think it is awesome that i am so in touch with what i am feeling, i just wish that i could express it in less violent or more controlled ways. but i think that more recently i have been finding out that the way i am is not so separate from the way that other people are. i sometimes forget who is supposed to be laying on the sofa watching everyone else living and who is supposed to be out going to work and being happy and together becuz i think that people are alot more like me than they lik to think becuz it would be fucking scary to be me. i am telling you this becuz you mentioned that it would make you uncomfortable to be arou people who were having panic attacks. do you thi that maybe that could be one reason why?

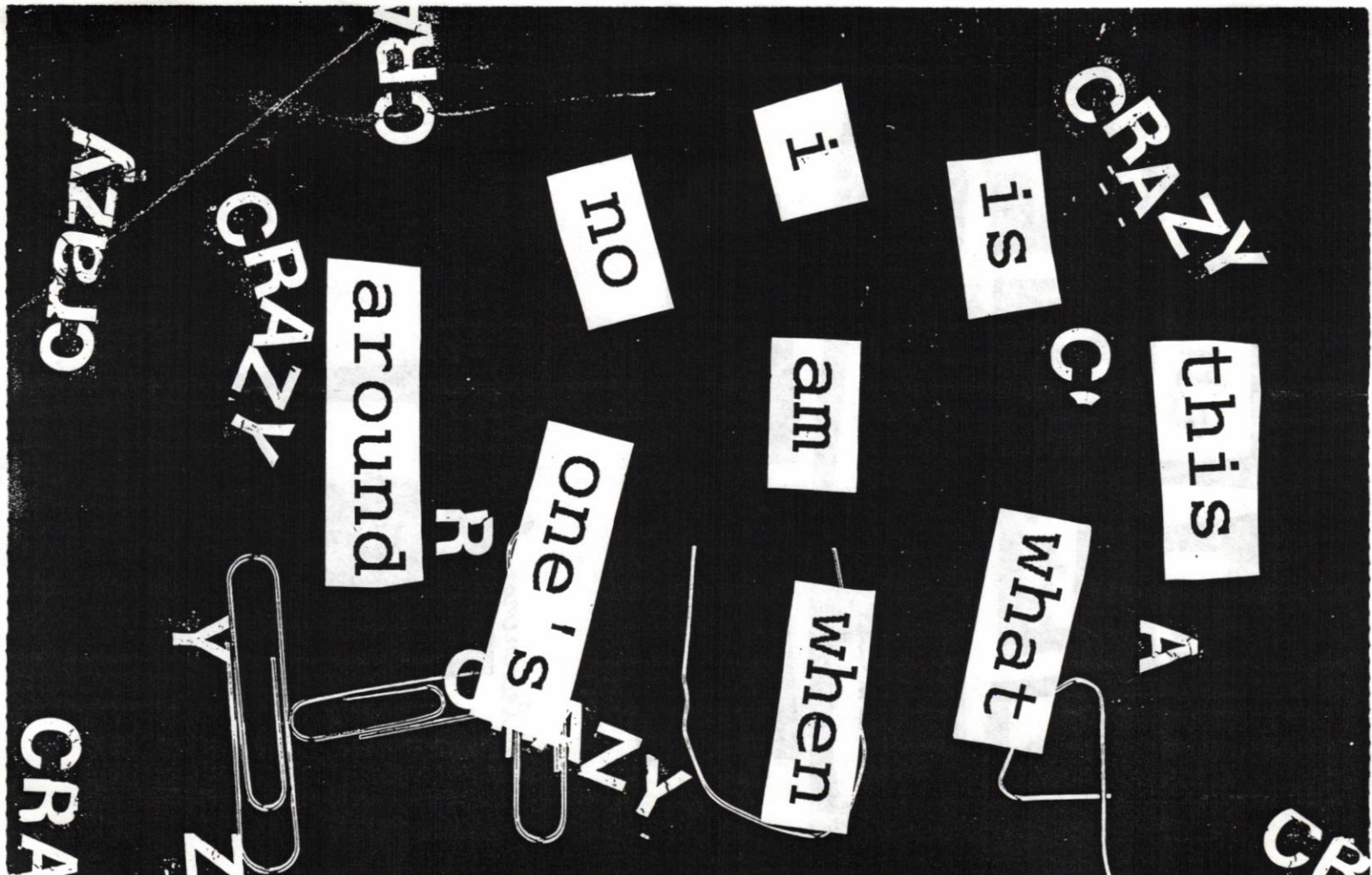
oh, i wanted to talk to you about why i have to separate the ways that i hurt people from the ways i have been hurt. even though they are connected, it is still too hard for me to look at them together. i mean, what kind of person does it make me if i can be hurt over and over again by something, and then turn around and hurt someone in the same way. and maybe you think it is wrong for me to be thinking this way, but i know that for now it would be really unsafe to be thinking about them together, becuz i have a big problem with self hatred, and i think that

i would hate myself even more if i were to start looking at all of these negative things. and i agree that it's something that needs to be looked at but right now i am so unstable that i can't and i think that you, if anyone, should be able to understand it becuz i think that you are in a similar position. i definitely think that i am accountable for my actions, and if someone points something out to me that is one thing, but i am not going to seek out any more bad things about myself right now.

i know this letter is only working through a little of all the stuff we need to work on, but i am thinking about everything that you have brought up and someday you will be getting a letter explaining everything. until then, i just want you to know that i really value yer friendship and i think that it is worth working through all of this for. i hope you think it is too.

love,
★heather★

PS-we still have to think up a snazzy name for our band!



things that i still sometimes
believe becuz of my father...

none of my dreams will come true

i can't survive on my own

i will always need someone in my life to
support and/or validate me

i will hurt anyone that gets close to me

i will scare away everyone i care about

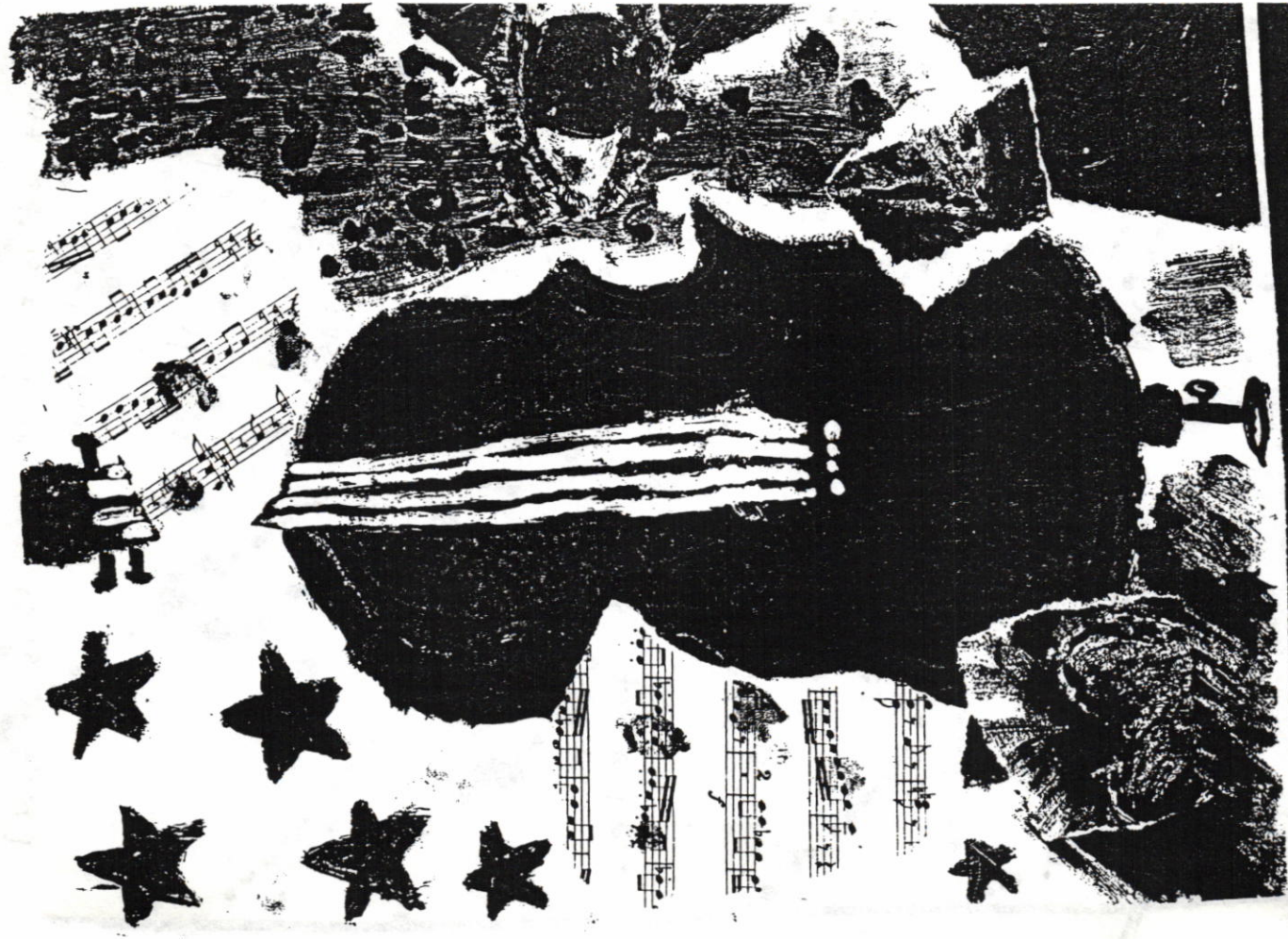
i will die alone

everything bad that happens to my mother is my
fault

everytime i have been abused it is at least
partially my fault

the best(easiest) way to communicate is through
violence

what other people want me to be is more important
than what i want to be.



this is my self portrait, 6/23/96 by Heather Lynn
i asked all my roommates to do a page for
them has influenced and inspired me alot

all my art is boxed in cuz thats how i
feel; trapped.

and i'm always

covering
all my insides,

always

pushing

them

deeper;

closer

together.

i want to screen,

shifter glass,

my insides

breathe
out

against a wall to

feel real

and alive and all of

my emotions,

but together

push it
and box myself
in.

can you even possibly be living life when i am in this much
pain and i want everyone to know what this feels like.yeah,
everyone i know tiptoes around it like it never happened, but
being quiet isn't gonna do much good when i my head i am
screaming and if you don't realize how threatening that
silence is to me as a crazy person maybe you should look at
what happens to me when people get quiet and pretend like i
don't exist...

these are some of the ways that YOUR SILENCE affects
ME as a CRAZY PERSON

you are invalidating everything that i am
working through by being quiet and pretending
that nothing is going on

it is fucking degrading.i don't even want to
look at any of you becuz i feel so ashamed

i have no idea what is going through yer head
and how what is going on with me affects you.

i begin to doubt myself and doubt that what i
am going through is even real.

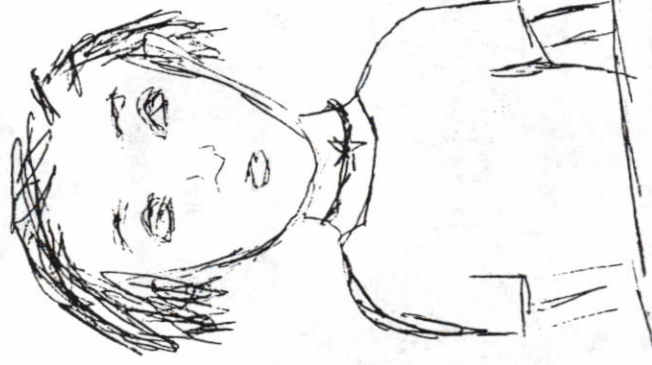
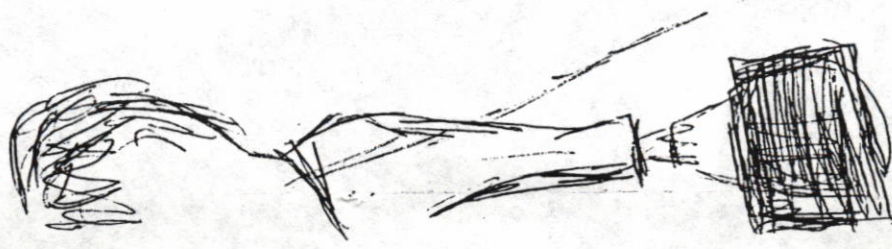
i feel even smaller and less important

like all my lists,this one is far from being done,
but right now i don't have the energy to look at
ways that you oppress me.that shouldn't be my
responsibility anyway.

i hope that you will think about this and maybe
add on to my list.and don't think that if you
don't know me i'm not talking to you becuz
chances are you know someone or are someone
who is mentally ill and even if you don't we
crazy people are still oppressed every day of
our lives and that is important and yer silence
is just as real to me becuz you are still
ignoring the ways you being quiet hurts me.

from this point on i can only talk about what i remember becuz i shut myself off after i fell asleep in the doctor's office....everything after that is totally displaced in my head, which is something i used to do alot when i was 8 and 9 years old. one of the nicer psychiatrists i saw told me that sometimes things around me are so bad i can't handle what i would be feeling if i woke up, but because i physically can't sleep all the time i walk around in a dream state. i feel alot better thinking of it like that, becuz i feel in control of something that i am doing to make myself feel safer. most doctors who saw me said that i was just being uncooperative and got mad at me. anyways, i fell asleep in the doctor's office and i remember them telling me to wake up. then i remember being in the car, and jenny driving and me being mad becuz she kept almost hitting people and cars and i thought i was going to die and i didn't want to see anything around me but i was really scared to shut my eyes and i don't know why, but somehow with my eyes open i just stopped seeing. when we got to the house i pulled it together and made myself see again. i remember walking in the door and really not wanting to be there and just wanting to be asleep. i wrapped myself really tight in a blanket and rocked back and forth, which is what my mom used to do to me to get me to sleep when i was a little girl. jenny came over and asked me what was wrong, and i felt so powerless becuz i had all these words and feelings floating around in my head but all i could say was "i want to wake up and go to sleep" what i meant was get out of my dream state so i could shut my eyes, but it came out all weird and sounding like i meant something else. i remember jenny laying me down so i could fall asleep and the next thing i remember is being awake for reals and being fucken scared out of my head. this was the end of the attack, but not even fucken close to the end. i have to talk to everyone about what was happening to me and i have to clean up my room and wait until the next time this happens and hope that i stay alive... and the point is that even though this is over for most of you after you stop reading this i have to deal with and live with this my whole life and i want all of you to think about how that must feel. think about how crazy people feel when we see you doing the things we should be doing and feeling as good as we should be feeling and i won't speak for all of us but it makes me mad. i get really mad during attacks. i think how

SUITS ARE MY
FUCKEN life these
DAYS...



this morning, I got out of
the house and i bumped into
Heather on her way in...

This is A self-portrait of me,
asleep on the train on my way
to my Cafe' job which i have to
be at to start at 7 am.
(the man is every where at that
hour-) D Michelle

SOMETIMES

YOUR

LAUGHTER

MAKES

ME

RUN

SHAME

MY S S

MY

STOMACH

IN

KNOTS

WHERE

WERE YOU

FRIEND?

Barak

Kennedy

i know who you are.

10 people in our house when it started, so i went to be alone in my roommate jenny's room. i cried for awhile, and tried to focus on breathing. when i thought i was okay i came out of the bedroom and everyone was gone. i thought i should call some of my allies (i have a phone list of like 5 of my friends who have committed themselves to helping me through panic attacks or just to talk whenever i need to), and everyone on my phone list was either busy or not home, and i started feeling really isolated again... and i don't know what exactly happened after that... the next thing i remember is sitting on the floor and realizing that my left leg was in pain- it was becuz it was on my guitar. all over the room all of my furniture, clothes, money and everything else that is mine was thrown all over the floor. and i have no memory of throwing and breaking things but i knew that i had done it- i have a history of being violent when i got scared or sad or angry and i also have a history of blocking things out when they are too much to handle. so i wanted to get it all cleaned up before everyone got back home and i just started shoving whatever would fit into a drawer or milkcrate as fast as possible. while i was in the middle of everything my roommate sarah called from work. i was so upset all i could say was "i did something bad" over and over. i finally told her what i had done- i was still pretty confused myself- but i told her what i knew and she said she would get off work early and come help me. while she was on her way home jenny and michelle and some of our out of town friends got back home. i didn't want them to see me all hysterical, so i wrapped myself in a blanket and tried to cry and breathe as quiet and normal as i could. i was really upset becuz everyone started talking to me like nothing was going on and i wasn't totally on the floor sobbing and as i've said a million times when people do that it makes me feel like i am invisible so that just made it worse and as soon as all of the out of town kids left and the only people in the house were me, jenny, michelle, and lara i started screaming and begging jenny to kill me and saying alot of other stuff that i already won't let myself remember. i finally calmed down and was able to sit up and see clearly and speak in words that people can understand, which is about all i hope for after an attack. jenny had a doctor's appointment and everyone was going with- nobody wanted to leave me in the house alone, which i understand, but i really had just wanted to sleep and they kept trying to get me to go and like pulling the blankets off me and i felt really powerless and not in control of my life at all but i am starting to get used to that feeling so i agreed to go to the doctor's with everyone.

This is a high-contrast, black-and-white abstract image. It features a dense, chaotic composition of thick, dark, horizontal strokes in the center, which appear to be heavily scribbled or drawn with a thick marker. Above and below these central strokes are more intricate, swirling, and circular patterns, suggesting a sense of movement and energy. The overall effect is one of intense, uncontrolled energy, with the black ink dominating the white background.

i can practically guarantee this isn't going to be all neat and concise and fascinating-these days i am lucky i can talk at all.but fuck that anyway.if people who are mentally ill are only going to be taken seriously when we play by yer rules then we are gonna be powerless forever cuz this isn't something i can just turn on and off.this is fucking my life and if that doesn't fascinate you too bad.this is about the only place i can talk about it without being interrupted, ignored,or made to feel like i'm not put together enough to communicate.fuck being put together.i love all the pieces of me-especially the ones that i've been told didn't matter.

i'm not gonna talk about what triggered it, becuz i am so scared that if i talk about it this might happen again and once my attacks start they could last up to a few hours and

i want to talk about strength, becuz lately i have been feeling really weak and powerless, and the more i think about it the more i realize how fucked it is. i've been feeling this way becuz i'm breaking down so much and i feel like i can't even function in the real world. and i already noticed in some of the things i have written for this i have called myself weak for these reasons. and i want to reaffirm to myself that i am strong. i am more in touch with what i am feeling than almost any person i know, and i when i am feeling a certain way i don't try to hide it-it is reflected in everything i do and fucken why do i feel like that is a bad thing? becuz everything i see tells me that showing what you are feeling makes you weak, and people who can keep it all together are strong. not only that, there is like all this name involved with showing yer emotions, and i find that whenever i show what i am feeling it makes people really quiet and uncomfortable and whatfucken ever... like it isn't hard enough to be listening to my heart without all of that intimidating silence.

my new motto is
fuck being put together

i am being smothered by all of yer silence and do you realize what a fucking privilege it is to be able to keep quiet when you want to? and i may be screaming trying pulling hair out can't get outta bed fucken crazy but i don't want the option of staying silent.

my heart is telling me something and i wanna hear it.

fuck yer silence

while we are talking about class, i want to say that everything that you said in yer letter about classism was fucking right on.. i just think it is real strange that around you people don't acknowledge that they might have a working class background. i find that alot of people i talk to completely downplay their class privilege becuz it's "cool" to be poor. i agree that people should acknowledge their backgrounds, but at the same time if people are really quick to identify with the working class then chances are they won't be working on their classism becuz they will be speaking and thinking from the stance of the oppressed rather than the oppressor. i know that when i only identified as a middle class person and didn't look at where i came from i was alot quicker to look at classism in myself. and i still do, but as you know from my writing i am also looking at ways i have been oppressed... which is important, but i don't think it's anywhere near as important as deconstructing my own fucked up attitudes... is this making sense at all? also i think this has alot to do with dualism and competition, and how you can really only identify with one identity, point of view, etc. i know that makes me feel really contradictory most of the time. i wanna know what you think about all of this!!!

okeh, back to mental health-the first time i read yer letter and i got to the part about crazy people being real becuz we can feel the things we aren't supposed to i fucken cried for the next half hour. that one line totally broke through everything i've been internalizing about feeling like less of a person becuz of what i am going through. most days i don't even feel like a person, becuz real people

can get out of bed in the morning. real people can go outside. real people can have a conversation without bursting into tears. thank you for reaffirming that i am real and the things i do are real and i just started crying again so thank you for reminding me that sometimes you cry when you are happy becuz i haven't done that in so long.

you know i could go on forever and ever, but if i keep writing about this i am gonna explode. we have so much more work to do and i feel empowered knowing that this is just a beginning... love and kisses
heather lynn

dear heather lynn,

but anyway, my panic attacks have gotten alot better. i haven't had one in almost a week and for me that is fucking awesome. the other day me and my friend anita were gardening for a few hours, and i was telling her how for me it was such a privilege being able to leave my house for a whole day and feeling like i would be okay. and i was talking about how i have basically been planning my life around when i was going to start having an attack ever since i moved out of my house. i seriously hope that was a one time thing. i couldn't handle that for the rest of my life.

but right now i feel superpowered. i'm the only one home and i'm listening to joan jett and i have been writing nonstop since 11:30 (it's around 4 now) and i miss feeling this way all the time so i am going to appreciate it while it lasts... onto yer letter- if it weren't for amazing and real people like you i would have stopped printing what i write a long time ago. oh, where to start... i think

it is soooo rad that you made connections between the way people treat you as a mentally ill person and a working class person. maybe i find that so applicable right now becuz of what i said about my class background hiding my family's mental health history... it's totally connected. my friend jessica made a list of ways she is privileged as a middle class person who is mentally ill. the class dynamics in the mental health industry are unbelievable. i think we've already talked about this a little- like how when i was hospitalized how long you stayed was directly related to how much insurance you have... and how one third of homeless people are mentally ill... just thinking about this makes me want to go burn down the houses of all those together doctors and psychiatrists that have made me feel like i don't exist.

before i start i just wanted to mention that i think your rad for writing your whole first name. not just heather. do you actually say 'heather lynn' most everyone calls me 'amber dawn'. my middle name is catherine, like the saint if you were raised catholic.

secondly i'm at work, hiding out in the backroom my body aches so badly right now. i had a four hour panic attack last night. i slept only after taking three gravol, not something i usually do. today i am feeling hungover and sore. anyways, i am telling you all of this because this letter might be slightly disjointed. soon one of my fellow employees will cor back here and say "you should either go home or get back to work." and because i'm too poor to lose hours on my time sheet i'll go back out there and help people find the right sweater opr whatever the fuck their high priced clothing hunger might want to consume this evening.

wow, i'm sounding very angry. actually, besides being at working hell today is looking better. i woke up this morning at 10am. this is a great sleeping in for me. my roommate, carolyn, asked how i was. so i proceeded to tell her how i can currently feel myself slipping into depression again. for me it goes beyond sadness. it's panic and my other personality forwards and all sorts of stuff, like i become accident prone. i showed her the scratches on my belly from the previous night. i told her i don't remember even putting them there. and i waited for her to be afraid or change the subject or something. but she said i should quit my job and go back on disability allowance. she said i deserve to feel better. she told me i don't have to do so much, and stress. she even asked questions like "why don't you cry around me, you always go hide." so i told her the truth, or some of it. i remember when i lived with my mom and she used to lock me in my room when i was crying and having panic attacks. and she threatened to throw water at me. there was a big plastic bucket in the closet beside my room and she would actually pull it out and yell "amber dawn, i'm getting the water now better calm down!"

right then as i told her i was thinking how it's been three years since i was in disability and how nice it is to have someone say it's okay. everyone thinks(usually) i can just keep it together if i try harder. it's like growing up working class and being told that if i just work hard i could have money and security when i grow up. myths myths myths

anyways, my day. so i descended down to my mailbox and there was this superlarge package from a super tar(that's you!) and i read your zine on the bus to work. i held it against my chest when i was finished and my eyes filled with saltwater, just enough so i could overlook the bus's gloom and the street chaos i passed. thank you thank you thank you heather lynnn.

i wanted to respond to pacifier. when i read your line up to the piece on class i really admired your ability to disclose so much about your past negative experiences. i want you to know i do admire you so much. and not only because you are growing and healing but also because you have survived so much. listing your memories and their affects are very personal- i imagine it's got to be hard doing so.

your piece on classism was so rad. i am working class. my last few years i spent at home my mom and her husband were experiencing mobility. now that i am gone they can afford many middle class luxuries. i am still working class though. i think many kids who go through class transition during their upbringing forget their past. i understand being poor is a history most would like to forget. however, everyone should remember where they came from. just like your last line about acknowledging where you came from. if more people had similar interest in personal class background maybe classism wouldn't be such a big problem. i mean, our parents' parents most likely were poor at sometime because of the depression. so most middle class people aren't that far away from having working class history. and in reality middle class people are in a closer financial bracket to working class than upper class. i'm really appreciative you've retained your working class memories.

having them my whole life(my grandmother lived to be 78 and was still having them when she died). this knowledge makes me feel really unmotivated to do any work at all on my mental health for obvious reasons. it also makes me mad that this is such a big part of my family and i am only now finding out about it. above all i feel really stupid- i should have known. actually, becuz i know that thinking like this isn't at all healthy i have

been trying to put together a list of reasons that i may not have known any of this. i think my class may have a lot to do with it. becuz up until me my family was working class they couldn't afford to have it diagnosed and therefore wasn't acknowledged. this would make a lot of sense, becuz my mother and i were the first to be treated for it. another idea i came up with is that i may have confused a lot of my families behavior with their alcoholism. 3 of my 4 grandparents, both my parents, and most of my cousins, aunts, uncles, etc have at some point in their lives been alcoholics and i was around it constantly. i may have seen their behavior as a result of their alcoholism. i have also been considering the fact that becuz i have been mentally ill my whole life i didn't really see it as something out of the ordinary. like, i didn't even acknowledge my illness until this year. and the more i look back the more i see things that i used to do. i used to go sit out on my roof for hours and hours crying and sometimes hurting myself and i think that looking back i was having panic attacks.. and also i'm looking at how they were treated in my house- my dad would lock me out on the roof to teach me a lesson. or break down my door if i was crying too loud. it taught me that this is something bad i should hide. and my mom used to go sit in a ball and cry and my dad would yell at her. when i was younger, i thought that she was crying becuz he was yelling, but now i am 99% sure that he was yelling at her for crying. i'll write more about this, but right now i can't. i'm sorry.

totally reaffirmed by it all being ignored....so after that i made an effort to talk to everyone about it individually and now i feel alot better about why my attacks were being so minimized.i automatically assumed that everyone in the house was comfortable with and completely aware of what i was going through,but of course they weren't becuz no one ever talks about mental health.i am so surrounded by the awesome work that you and i and some others are doing on it i forget that the work we are doing is really only being looked at by people who are going through the same things.so me and witknee decided that we are going to launch a revolution for the mentally ill by defining our oppression and making people listen.i have had so many rad talks with witknee about this-like why no one ever thinks about our oppression.we decided the problem is that we are all so isolated from one another becuz of the negative stigma placed us,and the way we are taught to keep quiet about this(at least i was) so there is no communication.and also now could we possibly speak against the doctors and teachers and parents who taught us everything we know about ourselves.there are obviously a million other things,but this is a start.and of course i want you to be a part of this.right now there is talk of doing a zine-so please send as much as you can.and any other ideas about why we are all so silenced and separate from one another would be rad as well.

so....last week i decided that i would tell my other about my attacks for a few reasons-as much as i have been fucked up by her i still look to her for support and i know she loves me unconditionally and would acknowledge that these are real which is that i need right now more than anything else.well, not only did she believe me,she told me that almost every woman on her side of the family has a history of having panic attacks since at least my great grandmother.this completely destroys everything that i have put together about my mental health. used to tell myself that it was a result of my past abuse,when i acknowledged it at all.now i have to face the fact that it is genetic and i may be

are you going to the portland grrrl convention? i'm facilitating a class speak out there.i won't go into alot of details.however if you are please try again to call me.leave a message because i would love for you to attend or help out.

okay,now for the part i really want to respond to.the mental health care part.don't you think it's fuct that crazy people(i identify as crazy,i like the word)are treated by doctors and psychiatrists who don't relate.i mean if you are not crazy why should you be solely in charge of traeting those who are?i think the whole system is so oppressive. currently i can feel myself relapsing and i don't even want to go to a doctor because i am so scared of being fuct over.so many crazy people feel like me,they have no one to turn to.thank you for being brave enough to break some of the silence.it is helpful and reassuring to know i am not so alone.

i would love to contribute to your book.children are already so vulnerable,especially crazy kids.i might take awhile.like maybe july.same goes for my zine,possibly by the end of summer.

the statement i ...i want my own...i want to applaud because we really have no choices of our own.crazy people need to reclaim their RIGHT to be in charge of their own care.for sure i need help and medical attention.but i don't need to be treated like an incapable animal or something.

also,i understand how the concept of needing to be fixed when depressed,angry...crazy people are real because were capable of having the emotions that society tells us not to.medication has always made me numb.i believe meds are a good idea sometimes.however,real counseling and being in a safe environment are important.doctors told me basically,just put this pill in your mouth and everything will be okay.whatever.

it sounds like your childhood, like mine, was traumatic. what about that. i can assure you, heather lyn, every doctor i had was middle class, free of the kind of abuse we've endured. i think you are so smart for drawing connections between your patterns and reactions. i hope we can work together more and keep in touch. i have to end soon because after all i am supposed to be working. before i go please know that i am listening and very committed and believing of everything you say. you are always welcome to call, write, or visit. thanks. xoxox amber dawn

ps-know that i am going to liberate some stamps from my work to mail this.

i put this letter in here for a few reasons. mostly becuz all i ever see in zines are letters of critique, which are rad, but i also think that support and positive affirmation are an important part of what we do and this letter from amber dawn really inspired me and alot of what i have worked through while writing this zine i owe to her and this is my way of acknowledging her impact on what i do.

dear amber dawn-

thank you so so so much for yer letter and for actually responding to pacifier. i am sick of hearing about how my zines are "rilly kewl" or whatever. have a million things that i want to respond to, but so much has happened to me since i last talked to you i think i should fill you in so you know here i am coming from right now.

about a month ago i was asked to leave my house. it's really fucked becuz i am sixteen so still powerless to get into school or a job or an apartment without parental consent. i have another year and two months before i can do anything, and until then my parents are playing these really weird power games-like they kicked me out but i still have to go home every sunday for dinner. i can't really figure any of this out and i'm not stable enough right now to try...anyway, i've moved in with the basement children. i'll be here until september and then i'm going to portland to live in the girlhouses-i think. i would love to move to the northwest, but i hope i will be ready to make such a big change. plus everyone putting the houses together has been really ambiguous about what they really are or if there is gonna be a safe space for every girl that comes up there and i am not strong enough right now to just show up in portland with nowhere to stay.

about a week after i moved in here my panic attacks started getting really bad. up until last week i was having them at least once a day. what made it worse was everyone that lived in this apartment was pretending that there was nothing wrong. it wouldn't have been so bad, except that my bedroom is the living room couch so there wasn't anyway to be alone. i would be having an attack while there were 4 or 5 people hanging out on the other side of the room pretending i wasn't even there...which of course made me feel worse about myself and doubt that what i was going through was even real. i tried a couple times to let them know that i needed what i was going through to be acknowledged. i even wrote a zine called this is a beginning, which i am sending you. it explained how i was feeling about having to leave my house and the things i need from people right now, etc...and not one of them said one thing to me about it. sometime soon after that i had an attack which was triggered by the things my father used to say to me...like how i would be alone and scare every one away and so on...and everything he told me was